

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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WORLD CONVENTION ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

You can have a first-hand experience of the world Church in action. You will be encouraged in spirit, and you will be stimulated intellectually by Christian leaders from every continent, if you come to the World Convention on Christian Education to be held at Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo, August 6-13.

This is the word of Dr. Nelson Chappel, General Secretary of the World Council of Christian Education, who is now visiting in Japan. This World Council coordinates the efforts of fifty-seven regional bodies---both denominational and inter-denominational---that have concern for Christian Education. Its last convention was held in Toronto, Canada, during the summer of 1950.

A minister of the United Church of Canada, Dr. Chappel is spending most of the month of January in this country, conferring with staff members of the National Christian Council, and meeting with all the various committees that are preparing the way for next summer's convention. He seemed well pleased with what has been done thus far. 1500 Japanese delegates have already registered for the Convention. 700 are expected from the United States, 125 from Canada, and many more from Europe, Africa, and various lands of Asia.

Japanese Christians--and some non-Christians as well--are rallying to support the Convention. The sponsoring committee has set out to raise $7\frac{1}{2}$ million yen, (\$20,909) and by the end of the year more than half of this sum was in hand. The World Council has budgeted \$125,000. It is estimated that the United States delegation alone will spend more than \$1,000,000 for travel, entertainment, and incidentals. 2000 hotel rooms--most of them air-conditioned--have been reserved for overseas guests.

Dr. Chappel said that any missionary in Japan is welcome to register for the Convention. Although spasmodic attendance at morning lectures and discussion groups is not encouraged, the evening popular meetings at Tokyo Sports Arena are, of course, open to all. A speaker from a different continent will be featured at each one of the popular meetings, however there have been some changes in the tentative list published earlier (ACTIVITY NEWS Number 113, November 1, 1957), and the complete program is not yet available.

A resource book on the Convention theme, "Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life", will be sent to each delegate in advance. This book is to contain data gathered from participating bodies all over the world. The major discussion topics are Christian education in the home, Christian education of children and of youth, leadership training, evangelism through Christian education, and Christian education as a part of theological training. A special section for laymen is being set up under the leadership of Dr. and Mrs. Matsushita of St. Paul's University. This group will discuss the question, what is the Christian responsibility of laymen? Each discussion group will be limited to about twenty-five members, to encourage full participation. Both English and Japanese will be used throughout the program.

The Convention will also feature a varied display of filmstrips and other audio visual material, and an exhibit of books and Church School lesson materials from all over the world.

In addition to the Convention and other important gatherings scheduled for July and August, 1958, the World Council of Christian Education has scheduled a "Christian Conference on Group Life", to be held at Hoshino Onsen, Karuizawa, July 21-August 2. In recent years some of the North American denominations have learned much about the feelings and responses of people within a small group situation. These findings will form the basis of the Karuizawa gathering.

Inquiries concerning the World Convention should be sent to the Reverend Jonathan Fujita, or to Miss Jean MacDonald, in care of the National Christian Council, Kyobunkwan Building, 2 Ginza 4-chome, Chuo-ku, Tokyo.

DISCUSSION ON PATTERNS OF COOPERATION

A number of mission secretaries from North American groups belonging to the Interboard Committee for Christian Work in Japan will visit here in March, 1958. They are coming to share in one phase of an ongoing discussion on patterns of cooperation between western mission agencies on the one hand, and the United Church of Christ and its related institutions on the other.

It is expected that the delegation will include the following: Paul R. Gregory, representing the Evangelical & Reformed Board and the American Board; Vernon L. Farnham and Edwin O. Fisher of the Evangelical United Brethren; Henry G. Bovenkerk, Reformed Church in America; David H. Gallagher, representing the United Church of Canada; Donald F. West of the United Christian Missionary Society; and Katharine Johnson, Interboard Committee secretary.

During the past two years intensive study has been going on relative to the problem of how western mission boards can best cooperate with the Japanese Church. (See also "Christian Schools & the United Church, ACTIVITY NEWS Number 115, December 1, 1957.) At a recent session, for example, the tendency toward secularization in the schools was seen to be related to the problem of financial support for the schools. Several decades ago, most of the money to run the schools came from Christian mission boards overseas. Now, however, only a small percentage of the amount needed to operate the schools comes each year from Christian agencies abroad. The schools must depend, for the most part, upon sources of support within the non-Christian Japanese community. Educational missionaries from abroad are an important contribution that the Church continues to make. More such missionaries are needed.

Christian social work in Japan also comes within the range of this ongoing study. Some Council of Cooperation members feel that the role of Christian social work is not direct evangelism, but rather Christian witness through works of mercy and compassion. It is certainly true, however, that people are being won to Christ through this approach.

In the area of evangelism, it is noted that the United Church of Christ is increasingly eager for the help of evangelistic missionaries from abroad. And more and more the Church here is in a position to define in practical terms how the missionary may serve most effectively.

MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP MEETS

A regional conference of the interdenominational Fellowship of Christian Missionaries was held at the Chapel Center (U. S. military chapel) in Tokyo on January 15. About seventy missionaries from Tokyo, Yokohama, and the surrounding area participated.

The opening worship service at the conference featured a sermon by Dr. Olaf Hansen of Japan Lutheran Theological Seminary. Dr. Hansen spoke on the text in St. John 21, "Lovest Thou Me?".

The Reverend Kenneth Heim addressed the gathering on the theme of "The Missionary and Japanese Social Situation", applying the word of St. Paul in First Corinthians 13, "If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing." Dr. Heim has a pastoral responsibility for Episcopal missionaries in this country, and maintains liason between the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States and the Japan Episcopal Church.

The afternoon presentation on "The Missionary as a Partner" was by the Reverend B. L. Hinchman of Yokohama. Mr. Hinchman reported on the recent Overseas Planning Consultation of the American Baptist Foreign Missions Society.

The arrangements committee for the conference was headed by Mr. Theodore E. Flaherty, Reformed Church in America, teacher of Bible in the junior high division of Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo.

PASTOR ATTENDS THAILAND CONFERENCE

A Tokyo pastor, the Reverend Shinji Iwamura, will go to Thailand later this month to take part in a training institute on marriage guidance and family life education to be held in Chiangmai from February 1 through April 20. This institute, sponsored by the International Missionary Council and the East Asian Christian Conference, aims "to find Asian Christians of outstanding ability who may in the future become experts and leaders not only in their own churches and denominations, but possibly in their countries" as well.

The Reverend Mr. Iwamura is pastor of Megumi Church, Omori, Tokyo, and is a specialist in marriage guidance on the Commission of New Family Life of the National Christian Council.

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OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARY PUBLISHED

A One Volume ~~Commentary on the Old Testament~~, prepared by a group of United Church of Christ scholars, was published in December, 1957. One thousand copies were sold within a week of publication, and a second printing will soon be available.

A similar volume on the New Testament, published in 1956, has been widely accepted. The present Commentary, representing the cooperative effort of twenty Old Testament scholars, is available through Kyobunkwan, Ginza, Tokyo, and is priced at Yen 1000. It is the first such commentary to be produced entirely by Japanese leaders in the field of Biblical studies.

